

Ensuring a healthy, safe, nurturing and empowering learning community is a goal the Board of Education established with our school community last year.

Our primary goal is making sure that each one of our children are safe. In turn, we want to teach every student to respect each other and learn how to keep each other safe. We want to ensure that they are watching out for each other, taking care of each other, protecting each other. It is not an individual plan, but it is about developing a culture within our schools. To that end, we are teaching students pro-social behavior. What that means, is that we are teaching students those behaviors that are appropriate both in the school environment and the community as a whole, and those behaviors that are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. We believe, everyone needs to recognize what bullying looks like and recognize when it occurs and what to do about it if it is happening.

We want to teach our children that they should not tolerate bullying in any shape or form. We are taking a stance of “NOT IN OUR SCHOOL” and in effect, not in our Community. We are developing the whole culture of understanding and tolerance. People are different, they come from different backgrounds, diverse cultures and abilities, different socio-economic conditions....these attributes make us who we are and should be celebrated. It is what makes us wonderful.

What we are we doing In Lisle Unit School District 202?

We all have committed ourselves to a community of caring. We are not doing just one thing. We are doing many things. Because we are doing so many things, we have been invited to participate in the DuPage County Bullying Task Force, facilitated by the state’s attorney’s office and DuPage County Regional Office (ROE). They are working to develop a county-wide definition of bullying as one of their first steps. A research organization known as CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning), based out of the University of Chicago, is partnering with the task force supporting the groups’ efforts to define, identify and increase pro-social behaviors and eliminate anti-social behaviors, such as bullying. CASEL will also be partnering directly with the Lisle School District supporting teachers, students, administrators and parents in efforts to learn, collaborate, and implement instructional strategies and programs that will develop pro-social skills.

To support the idea of building caring classroom communities through the development of pro-social skills, David A. Levine, best-selling author, teacher, trainer, facilitator and musician, was the opening day keynote speaker for the certified and non-certified staff for the school district. Several Board of Education members were also present in the audience. David Levine presented research on how the development of pro-social skills will decrease the unwanted behaviors we sometimes see in students, such as bullying. He shared ideas of specific actions teachers can take in their classrooms with students to teach pro-social skills, such as empathy. David Levine presented a blueprint for developing and supporting

emotional safety that included the sense of belonging (having a connection and an affiliation), personal power (feeling competent), personal freedom (having a voice) and fun (being engaged in the learning environment). David is an advocate for schools to develop an emotionally safe learning environment, develop caring and meaningful relationships and make learning real-life and relevant. The awareness has been raised in the school district among teachers, administrators, Board of Education members and parents about the need to focus on developing pro-social skills. Empathy is a necessary skill all individuals must attain if bullying is to be eliminated from our society. Lisle has begun the journey with a strong dedication and commitment to all who are a part of the Lisle Community.

Bullying is a pervasive problem in schools and communities throughout our Nation. We are not interested in having a “one shot” plan. One program or one meeting will not make the difference, but continuing to create a culture of caring will make a difference.

District 202 will continue to be proactive in providing a safe, healthy, nurturing and empowering learning community. It is the dialogue that will continue to happen. It is our goal to ensure the safety of all of our children, and we are confronting these issues head on....**our children always come first**

Please click on the following links to find resources that maybe helpful to parents:

www.casel.org/sel/families.php

www.bullyinginfo.org